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the east side a close representation, in the rough, of a mastiff's head. The others are all "laying around loose," in a very undignified manner, hiding in the vines and sumachs, and supporting a whole army of lichens without number: some slips of cactus have taken root in the crevices of the granite outcrop, but they cannot be indigenous to the soil, I think. The laurel, emblem of peace, is growing by the side of the massive boulders; its fresh, dark green contrasting finely with the grey rock. I have brought you safely home, and shall leave you to your own guidance, to go down the mountain or up into Cloudland.

W.

## Literary Record.

### ARE AMERICAN PUBLISHERS ALL INSOLVENT?

THE above is a question of much importance to the American publisher just now. It is asked daily, and replied to in various ways by members of the trade and those most interested. That there is something out of joint in the publishing world is beyond question. Several of our most respectable and extensive houses have failed recently, and while the trade generally regrets the circumstance, it fails to look in the right direction for the cause, nor makes the slightest effort to apply a remedy. We have, it is true, a "Publishers' Association," made up of the concentrated wisdom of the trade, but it seems never to think a portion of its energies might be profitably employed in devising means to advance the interests of the trade and relieve it of its embarrassments. The "Association," however, turns a deaf ear, and seems to think it wisdom to let the trade take care of itself. Now, there is a fundamental cause for those failures, and it looks to us as if publishers, could they be got to look in the right direction, might find a remedy.

Publishers complain that the demand for books has seriously diminished, that the taste for reading is on the decline, and that in consequence of the unreliability of criticism, it is much more difficult to get a book before the public than it used to be. Now, what are the facts? First, that the demand for books is as great and even greater than it ever was before. The American mind is progressive and anxious for instruction, but the American publisher, with characteristic short-sightedness, as well as ignorance of public taste, fails to provide for it. Second, the American market is being supplied by the English manufacturer at prices much cheaper than the American publisher can afford his books, there being no international copyright, and labor and material being about thirty per cent. less in England than in this country. No less than five hundred and forty cases of British manufactured books of the cheapest kind were entered at the New York custom-house during a single week only last month. It is also a well known fact that about forty per cent. of the business done by our retailers is in these cheap English publications. This heavy blow is most severely felt by the mechanical interests of the trade. The American publisher would not have an international copyright; he would undermine the foundation of his own temple; and he is first to cry for succor when it is tumbling about his ears. It was not difficult for the most ordinary thinker to see that unless American authorship were encouraged and protected, American publishing must share its hard lot. But the American publisher was satisfied with nothing short of making American author-

ship subservient to his will. And in attempting to carry out his policy he has driven the American author into papers and periodicals, and at the same time lost the true key to his own success. With no protection abroad (where the American author was opening a remunerative field for his labor), and no encouragement at home, of course, there is but little for the American author to do, and hence the English publisher steps in and carries off the American publisher's market, which he does at prices that would prove ruinous to our manufacturer. And yet, even with these strong proofs of the damage he has brought upon his trade, and the discouraging prospects if he pursues the same narrow policy, the American publisher is as ready as ever to pilfer the most poisonous foreign trash, and spend his money forcing it upon a reluctant market. And he will do this with his eyes blind to the fact that the American reader reads English literature because he cannot get American to his taste. Again, the American author, who, but a few years ago got well paid for his work in England, and was thereby encouraged to produce better things, now sees his work appropriated by the English pirate, and put into the market at the slightest advance above the cost of printing and binding. The honest English publisher has no offer to make for an American book the dishonest may reprint over him at any moment. This liberty of free stealing gives the dishonest English publisher a double advantage. He has no copyright to pay in England for American books, and can supply his own market with them at the cheapest rate. At the same time, he prints English copyrighted works, and, without the slightest respect to the author's rights, supplies the American market. Thus the English manufacturer commands both markets. He pays copyright in neither, and who can compete with him? The evils of this system are developing themselves to an alarming extent, and damaging alike the publishing and printing interests of the country. An international copyright is the only means of providing a remedy for the evils which threaten to totally destroy the publishing trade of this country. How long, then, will American publishers remain unmoved while this pernicious system of free stealing is destroying their trade and giving their market to a foreigner? They have the power to arrest this evil, and to apply such a remedy as will bring the trade back to a healthy state. Unless they move soon, it will be too late.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT of the Board of Education of the City and County of New York. 1858.

"Education, even in the poorest acceptance of the word, is a great thing, but the harmonious intercourse of different ranks, if not a greater, is a more difficult one; and we must not gain the former at any considerable sacrifice of the latter."  
—*Friends in Council.*

The Report of the Board of Education for 1858, is of special interest to all who speculate on the subject of Education. We think our system of public education is a very defective one, but acceptable, of course, because it is better than none; more enlarged views of the true end of education are requisite before it can be amended.

The present report touches on one matter that seriously affects the harmony of society, and that matter is the Bible question. Any consideration of the Bible question according to conventional notions, political or religious, is out of the question; it has to be tried by the cardinal principles of our federal polity. Everybody knows that if our constitution embodies one vital principle of paramount importance to the progress of a people, that principle is the absolute non-interference of government in religious matters. The struggles of European